

Attorney Docket No. P13276-US2
Customer Number 27045

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

1.) Claim Amendments

The Applicants have amended claims 1, 6, 7, 14, and 23 to place them in condition for allowance. Claims 5, 8, 9, 22, and 28 have been canceled. Accordingly, claims 1-4, 6, 7, 10-21, and 23-27 are pending in the application. Favorable reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

2.) Allowable Subject Matter

The Applicants gratefully acknowledge the allowance of claims 10-13, 19-21, and 24-27 in paragraph 4 of the Office Action.

The Examiner objected to claims 5-7 and 22-23 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but stated they would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Claim 5 depended directly from base claim 1. Therefore, instead of rewriting claim 5, the Applicants have incorporated the limitation of claim 5 into amended claim 1, and canceled claim 5. Therefore, the allowance of amended claim 1 is respectfully requested.

Claims 6 and 7 depended from claim 5. The Applicants have amended claims 6 and 7 to depend from amended claim 1. Therefore, the allowance of amended claims 6 and 7 is respectfully requested.

Claim 22 depended directly from base claim 14. Therefore, instead of rewriting claim 22, the Applicants have incorporated the limitation of claim 22 into amended claim 14 and canceled claim 22. Therefore, the allowance of amended claim 14 is respectfully requested.

Claim 23 depended from claim 22. The Applicants have amended claim 23 to depend from amended claim 14. Therefore, the allowance of amended claim 23 is respectfully requested.

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3.) Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

In paragraph 1 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1, 14 and 28 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Conner (US 6,597,681) in view of Ramaswamy (US 6,904,031). Claim 28 has been canceled. The Applicants have amended claims 1 and 14 into allowable form as noted above. Therefore, the withdrawal of the rejection and the allowance of claims 1 and 14 are respectfully requested.

In paragraph 2 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 8-9 and 15 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Conner and Ramaswamy in further view of Barany (US 6,584,084). Claims 8-9 have been canceled. Claim 15 depends from claim 14, which has been amended into allowable form as noted above. Therefore, the withdrawal of the rejection and the allowance of claim 15 are respectfully requested.

In paragraph 3 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 2-4 and 16-18 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Conner and Ramaswamy in further view of Lumelski (US 6,516,350). Claims 2-4 depend from claim 1, which has been amended into allowable form as noted above. Therefore, the withdrawal of the rejection and the allowance of claims 2-4 are respectfully requested. Claims 16-18 depend from claim 14, which has been amended into allowable form as noted above. Therefore, the withdrawal of the rejection and the allowance of claims 16-18 are respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

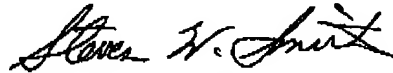
In view of the foregoing remarks, the Applicants believe all of the claims currently pending in the Application to be in a condition for allowance. The Applicants, therefore, respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw all rejections and issue a Notice of Allowance for claims 1-4, 6, 7, 10-21, and 23-27.

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The Applicants request a telephonic interview if the Examiner has any questions or requires any additional information that would further or expedite the prosecution of the Application.

Respectfully submitted,



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